

THE EVENING STAR.  
WASHINGTON.  
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CROSBY & NOYES, Editors.  
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**The Langdon Tragedy.**  
The suburban grade crossing is still exacting its toll of death from the citizens of the capital. Last night two more lives were taken by a train at Langdon, at a crossing which has frequently been complained of as particularly dangerous. It is but a little more than a year since Judge Claughton and Miss Cusick were killed at Deanwood, and meanwhile there have been many additional illustrations of the need for some form of protection in and around the city. The Langdon case is especially distressing in view of the fact that some months ago the railroad company, at the urgent insistence of the residents of that suburb, sent a commission there to inspect the crossing to find a favorable location for a gate barrier. Nothing further, however, was ever heard of the matter, and so the crossing remained unprotected, and last night's tragedy was the result. A heavy burden of responsibility rests upon the officials who have thus neglected the evident requirements of the case, after their attention has been pointedly called to the matter. There are many of these crossings in the immediate neighborhood of the city where disaster is hourly imminent. The traffic across the tracks is at times heavy and the menace is especially grave when the train users alight at their stations and try to cross the tracks to reach their destinations.

The star has frequently called attention to the fact that some of the more progressive railway corporations of the north have reduced this evil of suburban grade crossings to a minimum. The case of the New York, New Haven and Hartford road has been cited so often that it is doubtless familiar to most citizens of Washington. Last night's affair warrants a brief repetition. On this line for as many as thirty miles outside of New York the trains have a clear run without once crossing at grade a street or a country road. Walls, banks or fences prevent access to the tracks at all points, and it is impossible for anyone to be struck by a train unless death is deliberately invited. This is as it should be in and around every large city. The railways enjoy valuable franchises and are bound to protect the people from harm. It will not do to allege that accidents at crossings are the result of the victims' carelessness. The tracks should be so guarded that even a careless person will be safe. The Langdon case illustrates this point emphatically. The women were walking to reach the station at grade. In so doing they were in the right. The only way to do so was across the tracks at grade. In some manner as yet unknown they were struck by a passing train and killed. Had the road been properly arranged the victims could not have approached within dangerous proximity without being aware of the approach of the train. A gate would have warned them, even though it might not have prevented them from passing across if they persisted. But in the absence of gate, or bell signal, or barriers of any kind they were helpless.

**"No Monkeying" in Nicaragua.**  
The complication over concessions from Nicaragua to two different syndicates for the construction of the isthmian canal may turn on the question of a promise to the Maritime Company, the present holder of the rights, to extend the time for the construction of the canal. It is urged now that the original concession contained such a promise, and that nothing has occurred since the first grant to invalidate the right of the company to the extension. The matter is of some importance to the United States government, which has already in a measure espoused the cause of the Maritime Company, making its enterprise a semi-public affair. This is in pursuance of the policy already partly defined and now clearly dictated by the course of recent events, to complete the canal under governmental auspices. It matters little or nothing to the country whether the canal work is actually performed by the John Smith company or by the Joseph Brown syndicate, so long as the operating agency is American and the canal, when finished, is under the control of the American government. But it does matter if Nicaragua has in the last moments of her independence existence complicated the affair by granting a concession to a new corporation, ignoring to the extension rights of the existing corporation, which has been virtually backed by this government. If it should turn out that this action has been taken deliberately to prevent the acquisition of control by this government some effective means may be found to remedy the evil. The canal is going to be under the control of this country. Events have made that result inevitable. If the governments locally concerned are wise they will do all they can to further this end.

It is gratifying to learn that the transport Panama was not wrecked, as was feared for a few hours. The rumor of its destruction came from Cape May and was based upon the reported finding of wreckage bearing its name. There have been sufficiently heavy storms off the Cuban coast of late to warrant belief in almost any such suggestion, and the report of the Panama's safe arrival at Havana is therefore the more satisfactory. It is also good news that the cruiser Maria Theresa, recently saved from wreckage by the energetic work of Lieut. Hobson, which was thought to have been endangered by the elements, is likewise probably safe.

David B. Hill is evidently tired of waiting for the prize-fighters to do some prospecting in solar plexus regions.

The commissioners at Paris are discreetly postponing any participation in peace jubilees.

**Tammany's Latest Recruit.**  
Grover Cleveland throws his name into the New York race in favor of Tammany Hall. It is entirely fit that he should do so. His expressed desire is that the state be saved from "maladministration and extravagance." He knows Theodore Roosevelt well, and has given his character and ability official recognition. He knows him to be an absolutely honest man, truthful, straightforward, and to an unusual degree capable. He knows that Tammany Hall is familiar with his past and his present, and finds it an easy matter, as other men do, to compare Theodore Roosevelt with Richard Croker. He decides for Mr. Croker.

Is this gratitude? One finds it difficult to believe that, because Mr. Cleveland is not a man of sentiment, he is deeply indebted to Mr. Croker. The Tammany boss has served him well. In 1884, when John Kelly, an intelligent man, returned from Chicago thoroughly disgusted with his party's nomination for President and threatening to let the campaign in New York go by default, it was the plug-ugly element of the Hall led by Mr. Croker which reversed that decision and brought

out the democratic vote sufficiently to permit New York to be counted against Mr. Blaine by a narrow margin.  
In 1892, when Tammany under Mr. Croker showed a disposition to be ugly, the friends of Mr. Cleveland said, "Let Tammany have the local offices." And Tammany got them. The Cleveland men that year helped to put Tammany back in power, and Tammany helped to put Mr. Cleveland back into the White House. How Tammany used that Cleveland-given power; how it "assessed" doggeries, brotherhoods, green goods men, and every other form of vice and brand of criminals, the Lexow investigation, held a couple of years later, brought plainly to light.

But Mr. Cleveland's reputation even among his own admirers will not admit that gratitude for favors received explains this boost to Tammany. One must go further than that. In it the expectation of "favors still to come" that induces Mr. Cleveland at this time to give his hand publicly to Richard Croker and cast a slur upon Theodore Roosevelt? There are, despite Tammany assertions to the contrary, national issues involved in the New York campaign, and one of them is national expansion. Theodore Roosevelt stands for that. He favors keeping the flag up where it now is flying. Mr. Cleveland stands for the other thing. He would if he could reduce the wall to the gang from whom it was snatched in the interests of civilization; Porto Rico, Guam and the Philippines to Spain, and recall Weyler to Cuba to complete the work Mr. Cleveland so long tolerated there for the "pacification" of the island.

Is the country to have another Cleveland campaign? The putting forth of these little leaves indicates at least that the sap is again rising. Such was the manifestation in 1892, when the tree bore abundantly. But it is almost inconceivable that another crop can be gathered from it.

**The War Cloud Grows Blacker.**  
For some days past there has been a seeming incongruity in the warlike preparations of England and the willingness of France to withdraw from Fashoda. Inasmuch as the Fashoda affair was taken in the beginning as the animating cause of the mobilization maneuvers in England, it seemed to some observers at this distance that England was unnecessarily persistent in her bellicose operations in view of the French attitude of acquiescence. It was reasonable enough, of course, to suppose that England preferred the work of making ready for war until France had actually withdrawn or had given some substantial guarantee of her purpose to do so. Perhaps France's willingness to get out of Fashoda was the result of England's warlike front. It is sometimes difficult to differentiate between cause and effect in international dealings.

Now comes a new suggestion to account for the English preparations, which is more vitally interesting. Russia is said to be the object of these aggressive movements, not France. Stranger things have happened in world politics than this shifting of attack. England had a good excuse for mobilization proceedings in the Fashoda dispute, which would cloak her real designs if she, in fact, intended to move against the Russian domination of the far east. The trick, if it were really played, may not have deceived Russia, and the cable news showed that the latter has not been inactive while the London diplomats have been pointing out to France her evident duty in the Sudan. October 15 a Russian regiment occupied the town of Niu Chiang and the forts at the mouth of the Liou, thus securing a military command of the outposts of a trade of which England has hitherto controlled 90 per cent. A British gunboat, lying in the river at the time did not interfere, and the Chinese garrisons retired without resistance, acting under orders from the empress dowager and Li Hung Chang.

If this move should be followed by a few others of a like character, it is evident that the "open door" of Chinese trade will soon be effectually closed. Meanwhile English warships at Wei-Hai-Wei have cleared for action, and thus the war-scene is suddenly shifted from Africa to China, with many more chances of hostilities between the powers concerned than would be the case if the issue had continued between England and France. The attitude of the British public on the Fashoda affair has evidently indicated clearly to Lord Salisbury and his colleagues that little party will be shown toward a ministry which permits any other power to wrest from England any privilege or prestige which may now belong to her. The dispute over Marchand thus has its effect upon the Chinese situation, and it may eventually prove a serious factor, in view of the understanding between Russia and France.

**A Spanish "Horror Ship."**  
When the Spanish transport Monserrat reached Cadiz from Havana with repatriated Spanish soldiers, she brought the record of nearly eight deaths during the passage and 800 sick on board. None of the "horror ships" which reached these shores from Santiago or elsewhere in the Cuban or Porto Rican campaign had a tithe of this amount of sickness and death. Something seems to have been the matter with the Spanish process as well as that of the Americans. Our people are right in growing indignant if a single life was lost through the neglect of some one or more officers or officials in the equipment of the transports. It remains to be seen whether Spain will be proportionately aroused over the Monserrat. It is already suggested that the blame for the vessel's sad record is to be laid in Spain upon the American officers who "insisted upon the embarkation of the dying Spanish soldiers." This charge is not likely to be substantiated. But, whether it is proved or not, it will afford Spain one more opportunity to whimper about the cruelty of the conqueror.

**Before undertaking to supply the entire family the voters of New York might do well to ascertain just how many Van Wycks there are who are eligible to hold office.**

If Dr. Parkhurst is looking for a condition of affairs that needs the attention of some determined and intrepid reformer, he might accept a call to North Carolina.

Great Britain does not have to wait for parliament to make an appropriation in order to put its navy in shape for a fight.

Russia seems to have a quiet confidence in its ability to make a fight as interesting as it makes a peace proposal.

**Possibly the German emperor proposes to add to his literary laurels by bringing out a new guide book.**

**Another Police Station Escape.**  
It is evident from the facts connected with the escape of a prisoner from police station number one the other evening that immediate and careful attention must be paid to the interior arrangements of these places of detention. No blame is officially attached to this instance, the policeman from whose clutches the man broke away. He was not speedy enough to overtake the prisoner, who had taken advantage of an opportune moment to dash for the door while he was being searched. But it is necessary that some means should be provided to prevent these escapes. There should be no "opportune moments." Otherwise the chances of escape by a prisoner would be largely relative to his readiness of foot compared with that of the policeman guarding him. The practice of searching the prisoner in the open room or station office is not commendable. At such a time

it is unavoidable that the policeman's hands should be taken from their hold on the prisoner's arm, and thus the "opportune moment" is present to every quick-witted chap who finds himself in custody. In large places of detention this work is invariably done behind bars, or at least behind railings high enough to prevent the ready egress of would-be fugitives. There seems no good reason why, the searching in the city station house should not be done in the cell, or in any event within a room more securely closed than by the swinging doors which ordinarily form the entrance to the station. The danger in the present case would be minimized if it were possible to station a policeman or guard at the door. This, however, cannot well be done here as long as the force is kept at its present low ratio of numbers. This escape, coming so close upon that of the murderer Powell a short time ago from another station house, tends to weaken public confidence in the efficacy of the police arrangements at these central points of detention.

Emperor Wilhelm seems that the German empire is in a position to afford its subjects abroad effective protection. What is likely to cause embarrassment is a certain disposition to take people who are not its subjects under its wing.

The next promoter who approaches the English nobility will have a great deal of difficulty in getting receipts for any money he succeeds in expending for influence.

The anxiety of the two great political parties in New York to bring out a full vote is exceeded only by their eagerness to keep each other away from the polls.

By centuries of corruption China has managed to evolve a political system under which the foreigner collects the tax.

Governor Tanner has been having a particularly hard struggle in composing his Thanksgiving proclamation.

Accuracy of aim might properly be mentioned among the voting qualifications in North Carolina.

**SHOOTING STARS.**

**A Warning.**  
"I'll go to the polls and vote the way I talk," shouted the man with more natural oratory than he knows what to do with. And the cynical auditor grinned disagreeably and answered: "If you do you'll be jailed for a repeater in less than twenty minutes."

**An Oversight.**  
"Another mistake!" groaned Mr. Blykins. "Another great mistake!"  
"Who is making it?" inquired his wife.  
"The government," he going ahead and raising those sunken vessels altogether too soon. If Spain happens to think of it, she'll be sure to insist that they be turned over to her as a part of the consideration for which she will consent to peace."

**Impartiality.**  
His portrait 'midst the news you scan  
This is the fame for which men fight.  
From the next column glares the man  
Who burglarized a bank last night.

**Earnest and Outspoken.**  
"What is your opinion of coercion at the polls?" inquired the young man.  
"I am against it," exclaimed Senator Sorghum, hitting his desk in order to emphasize his words. "I think, sir, that trying to get even the humblest citizen to vote your way without paying him for it is an outrage!"

**Queer Campaigning.**  
Oh, where is the soft persuasion  
That was erstwhile in the air,  
When a national occasion  
Seemed so gentle and so fair?  
What's this stirring admonition  
That goes echoing through the town?  
"If a fellow politician  
Gets to showing opposition,  
I'll run 'im down!"

**Conquered Assets, Not Liabilities.**  
From the London Chronicle.  
Once more we cannot conceal our surprise at the ignorance of commentators in general, and the Spanish government in particular, of the relations between Spain and the United States. The correspondents and the Spanish representatives on the peace negotiations in Paris are now engaged in discovering with amazement that the United States will not take over the Cuban debt, and propose, on the other hand, to retain the Philippines who has been perfectly certain from the first that the United States would not dream of making herself responsible for the large Cuban debt, incurred in cooperation with Cuba and filling the pockets of corrupt Spanish officials. What a victorious nationing indignation if a single life was lost through the neglect of some one or more officers or officials in the equipment of the transports. It remains to be seen whether Spain will be proportionately aroused over the Monserrat. It is already suggested that the blame for the vessel's sad record is to be laid in Spain upon the American officers who "insisted upon the embarkation of the dying Spanish soldiers." This charge is not likely to be substantiated. But, whether it is proved or not, it will afford Spain one more opportunity to whimper about the cruelty of the conqueror.

**Sample Campaign Stillness.**  
From the Philadelphia Times (dem.).  
One of the worst of recent examples of needless sensationalism is furnished by the New York World in a display article purporting to connect the President's brother, Abner McKinley, with "War Department jobbery." It may be said in advance that while it would show bad taste in the President's brother to be connected with government business in any way, and worse than that if he had no use of the influence which his name might give him in the departments, it would not reflect upon the President's brother if he were aware of what his brother was doing. But in the case related by the World it appears either that Abner McKinley was not in it at all or else that he had no influence.  
Briefly the story is that of a contractor who bid on army supplies and failed to receive a contract. He was then approached by the unknown person who told him that the way to get a contract was to secure the influence of Abner McKinley, and that he could do this by agreeing to pay him a percentage of the proceeds. An agreement was accordingly signed to this effect—the payment to be made, of course, to the "go-between" in a display article went to others. When the victim complained he was consoled with a conversation over the telephone in which Abner McKinley was supposed to be at the other end of the line. Still he did not get a contract. He was then told that the contract was in the hands of the War Department, and that he could get it by agreeing to pay him a percentage of the proceeds. An agreement was accordingly signed to this effect—the payment to be made, of course, to the "go-between" in a display article went to others. 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